

## Butterflies by [talesfromthesnogbox](#)

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**Summary:**

Mike shook his head. “You like Hop because he’s your dad. You get butterflies... I get butterflies when we sit like this because I like you... like more than a friend.”

It's the summer of 1985, and there's nothing Mike wanted more than to take El on their first date. Thanks to the anon tumblr user for sending me this prompt!

## Butterflies

### Author's Note:

I'm baaaaack with another prompt fill! Thank you to whomever sent in the prompt on tumblr, it is much appreciated! Sorry it took like a year to write, I actually died laughing a little at the set picture of Hopper floating around because I styled Mike similarly to him in this like literally the day before the photo came out.

ANYWAYS, hope you all enjoy! If you like it, drop me a comment below and I'll love you forever <3 as always, my inbox is always open for prompts!

At last, school was out. It was the weird transitional summer between eighth grade and high school, but Mike felt more relaxed than ever.

So far, fourteen had turned out to be a good year. He had El back, Will was okay and hadn't had another episode in months, he and Max were on good terms, and she and El had joined the party as full time members. His parents were giving him more freedom to be a teenager, and Mike was sure this would be the best summer yet.

What made it even better was knowing that he had an entire two months off that he could spend with El.

El's knowledge grew faster and faster each day; she was absolutely brilliant going from a first grade reading level to an eighth grade level within weeks. She loved math because of how black and white it was, she didn't need human experience or research to back up her answers, she loved history and geography because it solidified that there was so much of the world outside the lab, and she loved art

because it allowed her to be free to put all her feelings down on paper without having to use words. El had caught up to the others in the party and would be joining them at Hawkins High in the fall, and Mike couldn't be more excited.

"You know Mike," his mom started one evening as he helped her with the dishes, "now that it's summer, maybe you should ask your little friend El on a date." Karen smirked knowingly seeing her son's face turn red with embarrassment.

"E-El? We're just friends." He stammered. Mike didn't want her to know how much he'd actually been thinking about asking her out.

Karen's eyebrows rose. "You're absolutely sure about that?"

"Yeah! She's a friend... just a friend."

"Well, Nancy seems to think otherwise. She was going to offer to take you two to the movies when she goes with Jonathan tomorrow, but if you don't want to I'll just tell her –"

"N-no!" He protested. "I mean..." Mike sighed, "yeah, El is a friend but... but *maybe* I like her... a little bit."

Karen smiled. She *knew* Mike had a thing for El, she could tell from the way they interacted right from the first time she'd met the young girl. As a mom, Karen was a strange mix of sad and proud, sad that her little boy was growing up so quickly, but proud of the man he

was becoming. She resisted the urge to pinch his cheek and held in a hug.

“Great, I’ll let Nancy know then.”

Mike smiled at his mom and immediately went to the phone.

“H-hi Hopper, is El available?”

“Yeah she’s here. Hey El... your boyfriend’s on the phone.”

Mike chuckled hearing a faint *not my boyfriend* come from the other end of the phone.

“Hi El, I-I was wondering, do you want to go see *Back to the Future* with me tomorrow?”

“Okay!” She said excitedly. “Will the rest of the party be there?”

“N-no... Nancy and Jonathan are driving, but I was hoping it would be just us... like... like a date?”

El was quiet. “Oh.” She’d been starting to go outside more often, apart from just one of the boys’ or Max’s house, but she’d never gone out just blatantly in public. “I have to ask Hopper.”

Mike waited patiently as El spoke with Hopper.

“Mike?”

“Yeah El?”

“He said it’s okay!”

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The next afternoon, Mike prepared for his date with El, but everything was going wrong.

The humidity made his normal (manageable) hair even poofier; he sighed as he tried to brush through the thick curls, but only made them bouncier. Holly spilled grape juice on the shirt he had set out to wear (blue, a colour he knew El loved), so instead he was stuck wearing a yellow short-sleeved button down his mom had just bought him.

Mike’s head hung low as he exited the bathroom, bumping into Nancy.

“Oh my god is that what you’re wearing on your date?”

Mike looked down at himself. "What's wrong with it?"

"You look like a dork. Here." She pulled him into her room. "Tuck the shirt in, but not tight, okay now roll your sleeves a few times, unbutton a few from the top, here let's fix your hair..." She fiddled with his style a little bit longer until she was content. "There!"

Mike looked at himself in the mirror and frowned. "I look like Tom Selleck in Magnum P.I..."

"It's fashionable Mike."

"El's gonna laugh at me, I look ridiculous."

"El's gonna love it, besides, she loves Magnum P.I."

Mike looked back to his older sister. "Whatever, we're going to be late."

Jonathan eyed Mike carefully as he and Nancy walked to meet him at the end of their driveway.

"Looking good Mike." Jonathan said, shooting him a smirk.

Mike rolled his eyes. “Thanks.”

“Be nice Mike, Jonathan is trying to compliment you.” Nancy shot back.

“Yeah man, you look cool! Are you nervous for your date?” Jonathan changed the subject.

“N-no. I mean... I dunno. I’ve never been on a date.”

Nancy looked back at her brother sweetly. “Aww, you don’t need to be nervous, it’s just El, think of it like you’re going to the movies with all your friends except it’s just you two. You guys are already so close as it is, nothing really has to change.”

“Unless you want it to of course.” Jonathan piped in.

“What do you mean?” Mike asked.

Jonathan smirked. “Well you know, if you want to be her boyfriend, for real I mean, you’ll probably want to like hold hands and kiss and stuff.”

Mike blushed. He *did* want to be her boyfriend, and he did want those things. He hadn’t attempted to kiss her again since the snowball, most of the times he saw her, he’d been with the rest of the party, and the times they’d happened to be one on one, Hopper had

been just around the corner. He of course didn't want to push her into something romantic, not when she was only just learning what romance was from movies and TV, but he really wanted something with her.

"Are you gonna kiss her?" Nancy asked him excitedly.

"Ew, why do you care? You're my sister, aren't you supposed to be like repulsed by the thought of me kissing girls or something?"

"Technically, yes, but I can't help it, it's the first time my nerd little brother is interested in a girl, I didn't even think you knew what a girl was before El."

Jonathan sniggered, knowing Nancy's train of thought exactly from his own talks with Will.

Mike sighed. "I dunno... maybe?"

Nancy shot Jonathan a knowing look as they pulled up in the driveway of the Hopper family's newly acquired home. Mike jumped out of the car, wringing his hands together as he reached the front door. He lifted a hand to knock, but the door opened to Hopper in his full chief of police gear.

"Hey kid, she's just doing her hair or something, come on in and wait." Mike followed Hopper into the living room as he waited for El. He really didn't want to make small talk with Hop, especially since



the man always warned him about “no funny business” whenever they had those rare moments where it was just Mike and El without the party. He got the feeling Hopper was never *really* serious about it, but Mike had never wanted to take that chance... ever.

“So... a date, huh?”

“Y-yeah.” Mike blushed as his voice cracked.

Hopper laughed. “First one?”

He looked at his feet, but nodded all the same.

“Hers too, obviously.” Hopper looked at Mike, the silence stretching. “Look kid, I’m gonna let you in on a little something here. You don’t have to be nervous, she hasn’t stopped talking about this date thing since you called last night; I haven’t seen her this excited since that dance thing in the winter. Whatever happens, just be a gentleman... there’s gonna be a date number two, believe me, she looks at you like you invented Eggos.”

Mike looked up at Hopper, face lighting up. “Really?”

“Absolutely. You can be a little shit sometimes, but I’m glad she has you. Oh, but if you’re planning on kissing her tonight, just keep it PG, okay? I was dating at your age, I know what happens when parents give their kids the freedom to date.”

Mike blushed, nodding, but keeping his eyes away from Hopper's. El chose that moment to finally make an appearance. She glided down the stairs in a soft pink sundress, and Mike could have sworn she'd never looked more beautiful, there were definitely stars in his eyes.

"Hi Mike." She said sweetly.

He stood to greet her. "H-hi El. You look... you look... *wow*." El smiled bashfully.

"Well, better not leave your sister waiting then Mike. Wouldn't want to miss the movie."

Mike nodded. "What time should I have her home by sir?"

*Sir?* Hop frowned. "Curfews, right, that's a thing parents do." He contemplated what would be reasonable for a night like this. "Ah hell, it's a special night. Be home by midnight and don't do anything stupid, you hear?"

Their smiles grew large and they nodded frantically. "We won't!" El yelled behind her, pulling Mike out of the house and towards Jonathan's car.

"Hey Ellie!" Jonathan nodded back at her as she buckled her seatbelt. He'd become like a brother to her (and hopefully would be her

stepbrother *soon* if El's sneaking suspicion was right), and she loved spending time with him.

"That dress is adorable El, I love how you did you hair." Nancy smiled back at the girl warmly causing El to blush. There was something enigmatic about the Wheeler family, all so special in their own way. Nancy was so cool, effortlessly beautiful, and El wished one day she could be just like her.

"Thanks."

Their ride to the movies was filled with Mike going on excitedly about it.

"The guys and me have been waiting to see this movie forever!"

"Won't they be upset that we went without them?"

Mike's face fell. He hadn't thought about that... the party *had* been waiting to see it all together. "I-I don't think they'll mind."

"They won't" Jonathan piped up. "The guys all freaked out when Mike told them he finally asked you on a date."

El giggled at Mike's reddened face. She'd freaked out a little too, calling Max right away asking for advice.

The four of them had arrived at the theater with plenty of time to spare before the movie. Mike paid for popcorn and candy, and they found seats away from where Nancy and Jonathan were sitting.

“You look... different.” El told Mike truthfully. One of the things Mike loved about El was that she never sugar coated anything, she always spoke her mind so transparently.

“Yeah... I planned on wearing—”

“No...” She reached up and touched his curls lightly. “Your hair. I like it.”

Mike blushed. “T-thanks. It—the heat made it curly.”

“It’s cute.” She smiled.

“You’re cute.” He blurted out. Mike’s face grew hot. “I—I mean... god I’m such a mouthbreather.”

El giggled. “A cute mouthbreather.”

His blush deepened and he ducked his head, offering her some popcorn as the lights went down.

El was absolutely entranced by the movie. She'd never been to a proper movie theater before, so all of it was new and exciting.

Mike was more enamored by El than he was by anything else that night. Sure, he was excited about the movie, but he found himself almost paying more attention to her than what was on the screen.

His heart sped up when she started leaning towards him, her head resting lightly on his shoulder as it had in the gym all those years ago by the inflatable pool. Mike looked towards the back of the theater nervously where his sister and her boyfriend had been sitting. She gave him a pointed look, and Jonathan pulled Nancy closer, winking, encouraging Mike to do what he knew he wanted to do.

Mike nudged El gently, and she looked up at him, almost disappointed, until he wrapped his arm around her shoulders, pulling her back towards his chest.

El smiled, settling herself into Mike's embrace, and sighed happily when he pressed a light kiss to the top of her head.

The two stayed that way until the movie ended, and even after the credits had rolled, Mike didn't want to move.

"Alright lovebirds, we're going for milkshakes, do you want to come?"

El's face lit up. "Of course!"

The four of them found themselves at Benny's minutes later. Mike gave Nancy a pointed look, wanting her to give them their privacy.

"Go get her, tiger." Jonathan whispered in Mike's ear as he wandered towards his booth, two milkshakes in hand.

"Your face is red." El mused. "Why?"

"Oh, um, Jonathan said something embarrassing."

She giggled. "Did he say go get em tiger?"

Mike frowned. "Y-yeah..."

"He said it to me too when we were at the theater."

He laughed along with her, his nervousness fizzling a little. "So how'd you like the movie?"

El went on animatedly about how she enjoyed all the action, and Marty's antics. Mike agreed that they'd definitely be seeing the movie again with the entire party.

“Mike?”

“Yes?”

“Can I come over there?” She gestured to the open seat on his side of the booth.

“Y-yeah of course.” Mike moved in further to make room, and El immediately snuggled up to him.

“When you put your arm around my shoulders... sometimes Hop does it, but it feels different than when you do it.”

Mike frowned, but slung his arm over her shoulder anyways. “Well... Hop is a lot bigger than me.”

“But my stomach doesn’t feel all funny when I sit with Hop.”

He smiled. “I give you butterflies?”

“I... butterflies?”

“Yeah, like when it feels like there’s butterflies in your stomach.”

El lit up. “Oh! Yes, you give me butterflies!”

Mike smiled. “You give me butterflies too, El. Th-that’s a sign you like someone.”

“But I like Hop too... why don’t I get butterflies with him?”

He shook his head. “You like Hop because he’s your dad. You get butterflies... *I* get butterflies when we sit like this because I like you... like more than a friend.”

“Like... like the snow ball?”

His heart stuttered in his chest as he thought back to their kiss. “Y-yeah, like the snow ball.”

A smile settled over her lovely features again. “Hey Mike?”

“Mmhmm?” He looked down at her. El’s eyes were full of uncertainty, like she wanted to say something, but didn’t know how to say it. He’d seen that look in her eyes before, but she’d never explained it. “El?”

She hesitated slightly, but braced a hand on his chest and leaned in closer to him, until he could feel her breath on his lips. “I-I...” She



closed her eyes, and the gap between them, brushing her lips against his ever so softly. “I like you more than a friend too.”

Mike could hear the blood swooshing in his ears, it was so loud, he barely heard her. But he hung on to the inkling of hope that he *did* hear her correctly, and rushed forwards to pull her into another soft kiss.

El giggled as she pulled away. She’d never felt this giddy, like she was lightheaded and she never wanted to come down from it.

Jonathan smiled a few booths down.

“What?” Nancy asked, turning in her seat to find her brother and his date wrapped up in each other with their backs to them. The couple shared a few chaste kisses, both of them blushing furiously. “Aw, he kissed her Jonny!”

“I knew he had it in him.”

She turned back around, frowning. “Ew, oh god, my little brother is gonna be one of those gross PDA couples at school, isn’t he?”

“Hey, I thought you were happy for him.”

“I *am* happy for him, it was cute for all of two seconds, and now it’s gross.” She shuddered. “What if it was Will over there right now

instead of them? Would you find it cute?”

Jonathan's face fell. “Okay you have a point.”

Mike and El shared a few more kisses before he was brought back to the present. He glanced at the clock on the wall and sighed. “Well, it's 11:30, we should get you home.”

El's face dropped as she stood and pulled her small purse to her chest. “Mike, can we go on another date?”

He smiled and took her hand after sliding out of the booth. “Of course we can.”

The drive back to the Hopper residence was quiet. Jonathan and Nancy said their goodbyes to her as she got out of the car, and Jonathan gave Mike a pointed look through the rearview mirror.

“I-I'll walk you to the door.”

Mike took her hand; the walk to her porch was short. “I had a lot of fun tonight.”

“So did I. Thank you Mike.”

“Hey El, do—do you want to be my girlfriend?”

Her face lit up. “Yes, I do Mike!” She smiled and leaned in, kissing him softly.

When Mike got back to the car, he had a dazed look on his face.

“You good back there, Romeo?”

“Hm? Oh, oh yeah! She just agreed to be my girlfriend.” Mike couldn’t contain his smile.

“That’s great! But if I catch you making out in the basement I swear to god you’re paying for all the therapy.”

Mike rolled his eyes, half annoyed at his sister’s childishness, but a bigger part of him couldn’t care less. The night had been better than he hoped, and in the end, he could finally be happy with El by his side.